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The Image of China in Turkish Secondary Education History Textbooks

Türk Ortaöğretim Tarih Ders Kitaplarında Çin İmaji

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ÖZ

Bu çalışmada Türk ortaöğretim 9., 10. ve 11. sınıflar tarih ders kitaplarında Çin imajı ve Çin'in nasıl ele alındığı incelenmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından yayımlanan ve günümüzde ortaöğretim 9. 10. ve 11. sınıflarında okutulan zorunlu tarih ders kitapları, Türk Kültür ve Medeniyetleri Tarihi, Çağdaş Türk ve Dünya Tarihi ders kitapları ele alınmıştır. Ortaöğretim Türk tarih ders kitaplarında Çin imajını oluşturan temel faktörler ele alınarak ders kitaplarında Çin'in nasıl ele alındığı ve sunulduğu, Çin ile ilgili olumlu ve olumsuz ifadeler analiz edilmiştir. Nitel bir araştırma olan çalışmada veri toplama tekniği olarak doküman analizi ve araştırma modeli olarak betimsel araştırma modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda tarih ders kitaplarında Çin adı çoğunlukla Çin'in İslam öncesi Türk devletleri ile olan ilişkileri kısmında geçtiği görülmektedir. Çinlilerin Hunlar ve Göktürkler ile olan etkileşimleri ve Çin Seddi'nin inşası konuları ortaöğretim tarih ders kitaplarında sıklıkla yer almıştır. Türk tarih ders kitaplarında Çin imajı, tarihi olaylar ve ilk Türk devletlerinin Çin ile olan ilişkileri üzerinden öne çıkarken, Çin'e karşı doğrudan olumsuz bir Çin imajı tespit edilmemiştir. 9. sınıf tarih ders kitabında Bir Kuşak Bir Yol Projesi'nden ve projenin öneminden bahsedilmesi olumlu bir Çin imajının göstergesidir. Sonuç olarak tarih ders kitaplarının tarihte dönemsel olarak iki ülke ilişkilerinden etkilendiği ve bunun sonucunda Çin imajının dönemlere ve tarihi olaylar doğrultusunda değiştiği görülmektedir.

ABSTRACT

In this study, the image of China and how China has been approached in the 9th, 10th and 11th grade Turkish history textbooks of secondary school was evaluated. Within the scope of the study, compulsory history textbooks, Turkish Culture and Civilization History textbook, Contemporary Turkish and World History textbook published by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Türkiye were examined. By considering the basic factors that create the image of China in Turkish history textbooks, how China has been represented in the textbooks and positive, negative statements were analyzed. In the study, which was designed as a qualitative research, document analysis was used as data collection technique and descriptive research model was used as a research model. As a result of the research, the name of China is mostly mentioned in the section of China's relations with pre-Islamic Turkish states. However, the interaction of the Chinese with the Huns and Göktürks and the construction of the Great Wall of China were frequently included in the history textbooks of secondary education. While the image of China stands out in Turkish history textbooks through historical events, no direct negative images of China have been identified. The mention of One Road One Belt Project in the 9th grade textbook is an indication of a positive image of China. The history textbooks are affected by the relations between the two countries periodically in history, and as a result the image of China changes in line with periods and historical events.

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Introduction

The interactions and value judgments of leaders between societies and nations are as significant as the interaction and perception of individuals towards one another. The primary factor in establishing interactions and learning mutual value judgments between countries and peoples is the education provided in schools. Following education provided within the family, the primary education process forms the basis for individuals to create a concept of “otherness”. The positive and negative information we possess about the concept of “others” apart from ourselves directly or indirectly affects our thoughts and behaviors in society. This image created through education in schools is shaped by directing our thoughts about “others”. In this regard, one of the effective factors in forming and shaping an individual’s perspective and thoughts about a country is the history textbooks taught in secondary education institutions.

History textbooks included in the education curriculum of public schools of different countries can create a positive or negative image by influencing the thoughts and perceptions of societies regarding other countries apart from themselves. This image, formed by the compulsory history lessons provided since primary education, may lead to problems between countries and in some cases, may hinder interactions between countries and peoples. Therefore, history textbooks taught in schools are one of the effective factors in getting to know each other and creating an image about that country. History textbooks are regarded as essential resources for individuals to understand the world outside the nation and to create a perspective and image in this direction, as well as being influential in the formation of national identity and sense of belonging.

Türkiye and China have a deep-rooted and extensive history of relations, dating back to ancient times. The cultural presence of the Turks in China can be traced back to ancient China. People-to-people contacts play a crucial role in strengthening the relationship between the two countries. As an old Chinese saying goes, “Friendship, which derives from close contact between the people, holds the key to sound state-to-state relations”. If Chinese and Turkish people become closer emotionally and understand each other more, then the two countries’ images of each other will significantly improve, and China-Turkish relations will inevitably strengthen (Yang, 2021, p. 50).

The role of history textbooks in shaping individuals’ understanding and perceptions of other countries cannot be overstated. Given the importance of people-to-people contacts in the development of relations between nations, history textbooks taught in compulsory education can have a direct or indirect impact on the image and perception of a country. Against this backdrop, the present study aims to investigate the representation of China in Turkish history textbooks, which are part of the secondary education curriculum that all students are required to take. The study will scan the information presented about China in modern times history textbooks of secondary education in Türkiye, analyze the image and perception of China in these textbooks, and objectively examine the nature of the information presented about China in secondary education history textbooks.

The research methodology used in this study involves a qualitative approach, specifically scanning. The study focuses on the examination of secondary education history textbooks in Türkiye, with an emphasis on the inclusion and emphasis of topics and discourses related to China, as well as the form and content of such inclusion. Data collected through the scanning process was subjected to content analysis. In addition, all visual materials pertaining to China, including pictures, maps and drawings, were included in the evaluation. The study’s objective is to analyze the discourse and treatment of China in Turkish history textbooks, irrespective of the accuracy or inaccuracy of the information presented in the sources.

The Historical Background of History Education in Türkiye

In Türkiye, as in other countries, history education holds significant importance for both citizens and the state, as it is intended to cultivate a sense of national consciousness and values. By examining historical events and prominent figures, individuals receiving this education are not only able to gain insight into the past but also learn from past experiences. The compulsory history education provided in schools not only allows individuals to learn about their own country's history and past but also serves as a window to the world, helping them understand their country's relations with other countries and the cultures of those countries.

Throughout different periods in Turkish history, history education has remained an essential concept, much like in other countries. Significant changes have occurred in the history curriculum during the Ottoman Period and the period following the proclamation of the Republic. During the Ottoman period, topics such as the History of Turks and Pre-Ottoman Turkish Tribes were included in the history lesson curriculum. After the Ottoman period, particularly in the Republic's establishment and later periods, history education and understanding have undergone further development, reaching the modern period. The history curriculum developed in the Ottoman period and the period following the proclamation of the Republic has influenced today's history curriculum. This curriculum is based on subjects such as Ottoman Empire History, Islamic History, World History, and Turkish History.

During the early years of the Ottoman Empire, the education system consisted of primary schools and madrasah education. However, history education and training curriculum were not emphasized enough in this period and the focus was mostly on Islamic history. The traditional school system of the Ottoman Empire did not include a separate course on history, and instead, only the life stories of prophets and Islamic elders were taught. Moreover, the history of pre-Islamic Turkish history was not emphasized much in the Ottoman understanding of history. Ottoman history was taught in terms of the birth of Islam and the spread of Islam, followed by a brief mention of the "Four Caliphs" period, the "Umayyad" and "Abbasid" states, the Seljuk, and a broad overview of Ottoman history. Notably, the history curriculum in the Ottoman era did not mention states such as Hun, Göktürk, Uyghur, Karahanlı, Oghuz, and Altınorda (Erkan, 2017, p. 396).

It was only after the Tanzimat reforms that history was included in the school curriculum, marking the first time pre-Islamic Turkish history was introduced to the education system. The first regular school curriculum was established in 1896 with the Maarif-i Umumiye Regulation, modeled after French high schools, and history was recognized as a component of this curriculum. Although this curriculum was never fully implemented, it is noteworthy for revealing the administrators' perspective on education, particularly history education, during that period (Erkan, 2017, p. 399).

Education has played a crucial role in the formation of a new and modern state since the early years of the Republic. As a fundamental component of being a nation-state, history education has received significant attention in the field of education. Curricula for history lessons were prepared at all levels of schools, and the Turkish History Congresses and Education Councils have played a pivotal role in determining the principles of history education (Boykoy, 2011, p. 158). The Republic of Türkiye was established under the leadership of Atatürk in 1923, with the aim of building a secular state to replace the Ottoman understanding. To establish a modern and secular nation-state, significant changes were made in education, society, and social life. "Atatürk recognized that modernization would first require a change in the mental world of the people, with education being one of the most important issues of the new republic. In the first years of the Republic, education underwent significant changes in line with the modernization of society and the principles of secularism. The education system

inherited from the Ottoman Empire was deemed inadequate for the new nation-state in terms of both infrastructure and content. Educational institutions, course contents, and existing staff inherited from the Ottoman Empire were not suitable for building a modern and secular nation-state in the new Republic” (Aktekin, 2019, p. 27).

The curricula of primary, secondary, high school, vocational schools and higher education during the Republican period were influenced by the social and economic developments and the needs of society. Thus, these curricula are not only a reflection of the cultural understanding of the period in which they were prepared but also of the principles upon which young people were to be raised. The main focus of education during this period was to instill national culture and historical consciousness among the citizens. The primary school curriculum of 1936 aimed to achieve several objectives through history lessons, including the comprehension of the Turkish revolution’s significance and importance by Turkish children, the presentation of contemporary culture as a product of the past, the reinforcement of national identity by highlighting the Turkish nation’s role in world history, the demonstration of the great role played by historical figures, the illustration of how people impact the environment, the revelation of future national and national identity of the Turkish nation, and the drawing of attention to human responsibility (Boykoy, 2011, p. 158). Therefore, considering the curriculum of that period and the goals of history lessons, it aimed to teach the new generation concepts such as love of nation, national self, historical consciousness, unity, and belonging.

During the Republican period in Türkiye, the curriculum was designed to emphasize the importance of Turkish history beyond the Ottoman period and Islamic history. This approach included pre-Islamic Turkish history and the presence of Turks in Central Asia, including the Huns, Göktürks, and Uyghurs. As Aktekin mentioned in his related article: “1930s were the years that history curriculum and textbooks were rewritten in line with the Turkish history thesis. The Turkish history thesis (Yıldırım, 2016, p. 51) focused on the idea that Turks made significant contributions to world civilization long before the Ottoman Empire. Following the last ice age, Turks migrated to other parts of the world due to climate change in Central Asia, bringing their rich culture with them and creating the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China, among other well-known ancient civilizations. This thesis asserted that the oldest civilizations were created by the Turks, with the goal of proving that Anatolia has been a Turkish homeland since ancient times, and that civilizations such as the Hittites, Phrygians, and Lydians belonged to the Turks. Moreover, the proponents of the thesis argued that Turks were at the root of all ancient civilizations, and as such, Western civilization owed a lot to Turks and should not exclude them from Western civilization (Aktekin, 2019, p. 29).

History Curriculum for the Modern Era

With the emergence of nation states in the 19th century, one of the primary responsibilities assigned to general education institutions was to cultivate individuals with a heightened sense of civic consciousness. As such, history lessons, along with language and literature, were deemed of paramount importance. During this period, the prevailing approach to teaching history was the traditional method of imparting past events and facts to students, as they were recorded by historians. In the latter part of the 20th century, however, a new approach to history teaching emerged, prioritizing historical thinking skills over factual knowledge, with an emphasis on developing students' abilities to evaluate evidence, think critically, and solve problems (Aktekin, 2019, p. 29).

In modern Turkish history textbooks, discussions on the concepts of “us” and “the other” are often included. Rather than providing an understanding of historical events and periods, the content of these textbooks focuses on promoting feelings of pride for victories won or criticizing lost battles, particularly emphasizing the former. The Turkish primary education curriculum

does not include history lessons in the first three grades; instead, social studies is taught starting in the fourth grade, with the goal of fostering citizenship among students. The curriculum aims to produce citizens who love their homeland and nation, understand and exercise their rights, fulfill their responsibilities and possess national consciousness. Students are also expected to value and preserve Türkiye's democratic, secular, national and contemporary values and to comprehend the fundamental elements and processes that constitute Turkish culture and history. In addition, they are encouraged to question historical evidence from different periods and places, and to analyze people, objects, events and phenomena. Ultimately, the curriculum seeks to help students understand the historical processes of human rights, national sovereignty, democracy, secularism and the republic and their implications for contemporary Türkiye, so that they may live their lives according to democratic principles.¹

In primary and secondary education in Türkiye, history lessons begin in the 8th grade of secondary school, with the inclusion of the "T.R. History of Revolution and Kemalism" course in the curriculum. Subsequently, history is taught in grades 9 through 12 of secondary education, with the "Common Turkic History" course also being incorporated into the curriculum. This course aims to provide students with comprehensive knowledge of Turkish history and to instill an awareness of the unity of the Turkish world. The Common Turkic History course emphasizes that the Turkish world covers a vast geography, including regions with a significant population of Turks in countries such as Russia, China, and Iran, as well as independent Turkish states. Thus, the course encourages a holistic perspective when studying topics related to the borders of the Turkish world.² The Common Turkic Cultural History curriculum includes the following units: Turkish History in the Framework of World History, Hun Empires and Later Turkish States, Turkic Khaganates, First Turkish Islamic States, Turkish Mongolian States, and the Common Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of the Turkic World.

In the context of Turkish secondary education, the history curriculum is implemented during the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades. This curriculum has been designed to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of the past, as well as to develop specific historical competencies and skills. Drawing on a range of social science disciplines, the curriculum aims to foster historical thinking by emphasizing the development of historical thinking skills. These skills, which are aligned with international standards, are an essential component of the 2007 History Course Curriculum, and include chronological thinking, historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical problem analysis and decision making, and research based on historical inquiry. In the 2018 program, these skills were further detailed and expanded into eight categories, encompassing chronological thinking, historical understanding, establishing cause-effect relationships, perceiving change-continuity, research based on historical inquiry, historical analysis and interpretation, historical problem analysis and decision making, and historical empathy. In 2022, the Secondary Education History Course 9-11 curriculum was updated to include learning objectives, values and attitudes, general skills, and key concepts of historical thinking. Historical thinking skills that are aimed to be taught to students in the 5th Grade Curriculum include chronological thinking, historical understanding,

¹ For detailed information about the Social Studies curriculum please visit Ministry of National Education official website: <http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=354>.

² For detailed information about Turkic History Curriculum please visit Ministry of National Education official website: <http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=1203>.

historical analysis and interpretation, research based on historical inquiry, historical problem analysis and decision making, and historical empathy.

Table 1: Turkish Republic Secondary Education History Curriculum

9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade
History and Time	Seljuk Türkiye in the Settlement and Nationalization Process	Policy of Ottoman in the Face of Changing World Balances (1595-1774)
Early Periods of Humanity	Ottoman Policy from Principality to State (1302-1453)	Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the Age of Change
The World in the Middle Ages	Warriors and Soldiers in the Nationalization Process	State-Society Relations Changing in the Age of Revolutions
Turkish World in the First and Middle Ages	Ottoman Civilization from Principality to State	Balance Strategy in International Relations (1774-1914)
The Birth of Islamic Civilization	World Power Ottoman (1453-1595)	Socio-Economic Life Changing in the 19th and 20st Century
Acceptance of Islam by Turks and the First Turkic Islamic States	Sultan and the Ottoman Central Government	
	Ottoman Empire Social Order in the Classical Age	

In the context of secondary education in Türkiye, the 12th grade curriculum includes the Turkish Republic Revolution and Kemalism course. This course aims to elucidate the establishment of a new state after the collapse of its predecessor, the struggle of the Turkish nation to attain a contemporary level of civilization under the guidance of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the reestablishment of Türkiye as a respected player on the global stage.³

In addition to the aforementioned compulsory history courses, elective courses such as Turkish Culture and Civilization History and Contemporary Turkish and World History are also available at secondary education institutions. The Turkish Culture and Civilization History course is highly significant in that it seeks to convey cultural values that originated in Central Asia, developed with the adoption of Islam, spread worldwide through the Ottoman Empire, and continue to be maintained by the Republic of Türkiye.

The Turkish Culture and Civilization History course is designed to encompass not only political history but also economic, social, and cultural aspects. The course is structured to cover the period from the first Turkish states to the Republican Period. The curriculum comprises seven units, namely State Organization in Turks, Social Structure in Turks, Law in Turks, Economy in Turks, Education and Science in Turks, Art in Turks, and Sports in Turks. The interconnectivity of these units is evident in the institutional structure of the state organization.

³ For detailed information about T.R. History of Revolution and Kemalism please visit Ministry of National Education official website: <http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=346>.

Therefore, the content of each unit is related to the others, and they are all integral in providing a comprehensive understanding of the history of Turkish culture and civilization.⁴

The 20th century has been a period of immense development in terms of political, socio-cultural and technological advancements, which have left their mark on societies and states worldwide. These developments have continued to shape the world we live in today. Thus, in order to understand the current landscape, it is imperative to examine the recent past using comprehensive sources. This requires a focus on events that are directly relevant to our country and society, and the issues that pertain to our recent past and geography. The importance of Türkiye's geopolitical and strategic position must also be evaluated from both regional and global perspectives, and the effects of scientific and technological developments on societies must be analyzed. The Contemporary Turkish and World History Curriculum is designed to enable students to gain a thorough understanding of the developments that have taken place in Türkiye and around the world from the beginning of the 20th century to the present day. It aims to help them comprehend the effects of political, economic, social, cultural, and scientific developments on Türkiye, as well as Türkiye's response to these changes over the course of the 20th century. Furthermore, the course seeks to help students understand their role in the world, equip them to respond to the evolving needs of the 21st century and enable them to make predictions for the future. The course is divided into units that cover the World between Two Global Wars, the Second World War, the Cold War Period, the Detention Period and the Globalizing World.

An Overview of Türkiye and China Relations

The Republic of Türkiye's initial contact with China occurred in 1927. However, Turkish-Chinese relations have a long-standing and deeply rooted history. The Turks and the Chinese have a shared culture and history due to their close proximity to each other in ancient times. The Huns, from the pre-Islamic Turkish states known as "Xiongnu (匈奴)" in Chinese sources, had contact with the Chinese during the Han Dynasty. As Onat mention, after Han Dynasty was founded in 206 BC, the foreign policy of dynasty was concentrated on relations with the Huns. During Emperor Wu Di, in order to establish political superiority over the Huns for the first time, abandoned the defense policy and started to attack to Huns (Onat, 1987, p. 611-612). In order to prevent attacks from the Huns, Han Dynasty followed different policies against to the Huns. Emperor Wu Di followed Ensuring Hebei Border Security and Heqin Policy which means establishing relationships through kinship. The policies implemented by the Han Dynasty created a peaceful environment for a while, but It couldn't completely stop the attacks from the Huns (Gökenç Gülez, 2022, p. 722). After the Huns were divided into, Hun-Chinese relations underwent both political and economic changes. From now on, China implemented various political and economic measures to prevent the Huns from reuniting and gaining strength (Onat, 1987, p. 613).

Gokturks, referred to as Tujue (突厥) in Chinese sources, had close contacts with the Chinese people during the Sui and Tang Dynasties of China. During this period, both war and peace were made. Chinese emperors sometimes bestowed titles upon the Turkish khans and established kinship relations through marriage, as well as engaging in mutual commercial and other activities (Eberhard, 1995, p. 191-197). Although struggles between Gokturks and China in the history is often mentioned, Gokturks contributed to the continuation of trading

⁴ For detailed information about The Turkish Culture and Civilization History textbook please visit Ministry of National Education official website: <http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/ProgramDetay.aspx?PID=345>.

activities on the Silk Road routes and ensured that porcelain and silk produced in China were delivered to Byzantium (Yang Chao, 1989, p. 749).

Despite historical accounts mainly highlighting conflict between the two civilizations, they have had interactions in various fields such as politics, culture, trade, economy and art. As nomads, the Turks did not utilize the silk obtained from China through commercial activities, instead transporting it as far west as the Byzantium and Eastern Roman Empire. Therefore, the Turks acted as intermediaries and bridges between the East and West along the Silk Road. After the arrival of Arabs in Central Asia, the Turks dispersed in the Hezhong region. The Turks regained their former power by establishing the Karakhanid, Seljuk, and Ottoman dynasties as the Arab power waned. The Ottoman Turks established a state in Anatolia and conquered the Eastern Roman Empire, which became a significant empire spanning Asia, Europe, and Africa (Yang Chao, 1989, p. 749). The Turks' westward expansion from East Asia did not impede contact between them and the Chinese. The two civilizations, having lived in close proximity throughout history, have interacted in various fields, and Chinese culture has permeated Turkish life, while Turkish activities in Central Asia have significantly influenced Chinese culture and politics. Chinese historical records of ancient times contain information about Turkish history before Islam.

Although diplomatic contacts were sporadic between the two empires during the Ottoman era, official relations were not established. Despite various attempts, the Ottoman and Chinese empires in the early 20th century did not have any diplomatic treaties and conducted their relations through other countries. Nevertheless, the absence of official relations did not preclude commercial interactions. Before 1908, Türkiye exported approximately 30 tons of opium annually to China (Altan, 2013, p. 95).

After the proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye, there have been significant developments about Turkish-Chinese relations. The first contact between the Republic of Türkiye and China took place in 1927, followed by the opening of the Turkish embassy in Nanjing, the capital of the period, in 1929. With the closure of the Chinese Embassy of Türkiye in 1931 due to the economic difficulties, charge d'affaires Hulusi Fuat Tugay left China on August 2, 1931. After that the Friendship Agreement was signed between two countries in 1934. The Chinese Embassy of Türkiye which was closed in 1931 due to the economic difficulties, was reopened with the appointment of Emin Ali Sipahi as ambassador in 1939. In 1944, two states mutually upgraded its embassies to embassy level. Hulusi Fuat Tugay, who established the first Türkiye -China relationship as chargé d'affaires during the Atatürk Era, was appointed as the first Turkish Ambassador. Türkiye-China relations between 1920 and 1950, led by Mustafa Kemal and İsmet İnönü were economically minimal and politically secular for two countries (Akdağ, 2019, p. 42). Official relations between the two nations were established in 1971, coinciding with China's recognition in the United Nations and the international community. 2021 marked the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Türkiye and China. Moreover, Türkiye's strategic location has made it an important partner in China's One Belt One Road Initiative, also known as the New Silk Road Project, which was introduced by Chinese Prime Minister Xi Jinping in 2013. While commercial and economic cooperation has continued, cultural interactions between the two nations persist through people-to-people contacts. The Middle Corridor Initiative, which forms the Turkish leg of the New Silk Road Project, seeks to revive the ancient Silk Road and create new economic corridors by strengthening relations between Türkiye and the Central Asian Turkic Republics. This initiative is of great significance in fostering bilateral cooperation between Türkiye and China in various domains, including trade, economy, politics, and culture.

The Representation of China in History Textbooks

The Relationship Between the Early Turkic States (Hun, Göktürks, Uyghur) and China

When examining the content of modern Turkish history textbooks, it becomes apparent that the mention of China is primarily confined to the relations between the pre-Islamic Turkic states of the Huns, Göktürks, and Uyghurs with China (Kaya, 2019, p. 51). With the exception of these relations, information regarding China is restricted to topics such as the first age civilizations, Chinese innovations such as paper and printing, the Turkish Calendar with 12 animals, the struggle for control of the Ancient Silk Road, Silk Road trade routes, Chinese trading, Chinese policies against the Huns during the Ancient Period, the Great Wall of China and its construction, Turkic beliefs, the Mongol Empire, and China's admission to the United Nations. It is worth noting that when Turkish-Chinese relations are mentioned, the primary focus is on the struggles and wars of the Huns and Göktürks with China. In discussing the first Turkic states, history textbooks touch on the social structure, art and education, Chinese sources, and Chinese ambassadors, such as Wang Yan Di (Yüksel, Kapar, Bağcı, Bildik, Şahin Şafak, Ardiç, 2021a, p. 99), who traveled to the region and submitted reports to the Chinese emperor (İzgi, 2000). Furthermore, while discussing Hun-Chinese relations, textbooks emphasize the Huns' military might in suppressing China, obtaining state and popular needs from China through taxation or trading and seeking to establish superiority over China. At the same time, the textbooks underline the Chinese empire's primary goal of dominating the Huns through its policies against them (Yüksel ve diğerleri, 2021a, p. 100). In addition to the first Turkish states, the textbooks also mention Genghis Khan's success in uniting the Mongolian tribes under a single flag, starting with the domination of the Kansu and Ordu regions and ultimately conquering Beijing after lengthy wars (Yüksel, Kapar, Bağcı, Bildik, Şahin Şafak, Ardiç, 2021b, p. 37).

In Turkish history textbooks, when discussing the culture and lifestyle of the Huns, one of the earliest Turkish states, citations from Chinese sources are often included, indicating the significance of Chinese sources for Turkish history. For instance, one section of the textbook describes the houses of the Huns as being constructed from beaten clay, drawing upon information from Chinese sources (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 98). Another example of Turkish reliance on Chinese sources is found under the heading of the Chinese Ambassador's Report, which provides information about the social and culinary habits of the Turfan Uyghurs, as reported by Chinese ambassador Wang Yen-te, who visited the region between 981-984. This reliance on Chinese sources highlights the importance of China in shaping the early Turkish states' culture and way of life. The report notes that:

The city of "Kao-Ch'ang (Turfan)" lacks rain and snow and is extremely hot. It further describes the local cuisine, stating that rich people eat horse meat while others consume beef and wild goose, and notes the use of the kopuz in local music (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 99).

History textbooks taught in previous years mention that the Chinese benefited from the Huns in different areas. It was said that they were especially influenced by the military and military issues (Kaya, 2019, p. 57). In the modern period history textbooks in Türkiye, the representation of Turkish-Chinese interactions is multifaceted. The textbooks mention the military superiority of the Turks over the surrounding nations, which is attributed to their use of horses and iron as elements of steppe culture. It is further noted that every Turk who reaches the age of youth is an excellent rider due to their early exposure to horseback riding. The Chinese, who could not be successful in wars with the Huns, attempted to stop the Turks by organizing their armies in the Hun style and underwent a military reform that lasted for a hundred years (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 99).

The textbooks also detail the influence of the Chinese on the Turks' religion and lifestyle. For instance, it is mentioned that: "*The Uyghurs' closeness to the Chinese and their acceptance of Manichaeism led to a rapid change in the social structure of the Uyghurs, resulting in a tendency towards urbanization*" (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 99). Additionally, it is noted that II. Bilge Kagan, a Turkish ruler, desired to become Buddhist under the influence of the Chinese; however, the congress rejected the proposal on the grounds that it did not fit the Turks' lifestyle (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 101). Thus, the textbooks highlight the reciprocal influence of the Chinese and Turks in different fields, including state organization and military issues, as well as religion and social structure.

Intermarriage Between Chinese Princesses and Turks in the Historical Context of "Heqin Policy"

Turkish history textbooks frequently discuss the subject of Chinese princesses who were married to Turks, within the context of Turkish-Chinese relations. There exists a widespread perception in Turkish society that these princesses were spies who conveyed internal news to the Chinese. Most of the history textbooks previously taught in secondary education in different years state that the marriage relationship established between the Turkish and Chinese dynasties facilitated the execution of the policy of intrigue. "For example, in the textbook dated 1931, the destructive role of Chinese princesses in Turkish palaces in the collapse of the Eastern and Western Göktürks was mentioned. In the 1939 textbook, were mentioned about the Chinese intrigues and the role of the princesses in the palace in the division of the Hun empire and It also was emphasized that Chinese princess acted as spies for the Chinese state (Kaya, 2019, p. 65)." This perception stems from the heqin policy followed during the Han dynasty to prevent attacks from the Huns. The heqin policy aimed to establish kinship relations through marriage in order to reach an agreement with the Huns, who posed a significant danger to the Han dynasty. The policy prevented military conflicts between the two sides for a while and contributed to the improvement of the community economy. The history textbooks mention Chinese princesses who were married to the Huns within the scope of the heqin policy as agents who were brought into the Hun country. About Chinese princesses relevant section in the book is as follows:

The Chinese emperors had brought many agents to the Huns in the entourage of the Chinese princesses they sent as wives to the Hun khans, especially in the times of peace. These agents had allegedly caused enmity and conflict between the Hun chiefs and their communities through various intrigues and had also accustomed the Huns to comfort and pleasure by sending luxury goods to the Hun country through trading, which weakened the fighting abilities of the Turks (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 100).

The Construction of the Great Wall of China in Turkish History Textbooks

In the context of Turkish-Chinese relations in Türkiye, the Great Wall of China is a prominent subject that is frequently discussed. In the history textbooks taught in previous years, the Great Wall of China was treated as a symbol emphasizing the military superiority of the Turks and the fear of the Chinese. It was also mentioned that, in order prevent the raids from the Huns, Chinese built the Great Wall o China. Because Chinese were afraid of them. However, it can be seen that the construction of the Great Wall of China was reflected in the textbooks as an achievement and skill of the Turks, not as an achievement and skill of the Chinese (Kaya, 2019, p. 61). Despite the limited knowledge of the Turks on this structure, which is often associated with the history of Central Asia, it is often perceived as a source of pride and is proudly expressed that the Chinese feared the Turks. The construction of the Great Wall of China can be attributed to several reasons, primarily for defense purposes and to establish the border between the Chinese and nomadic nations. The construction of the wall served as a message from Emperor Qin Shi Huang to the nomadic nations that the wall constituted the border between them and beyond the wall was Chinese territory. At that time, the Chinese were frequently attacked by the Huns from the north and believed that their borders were under threat,

leading to the construction of the Great Wall as a preventive measure (Okay, 1993, p. 27-40). In history textbook, the section about the Great Wall of China (Image 1) is quoted from pages 42 and 43 of Jean Paul Roux's Central Asian History and Civilization (Roux, 2011, p. 42-43) source, where it is discussed under the title "Defense Walls of Settled Societies Against Nomads:"

Settled societies have devised various methods to protect themselves from nomads, with one of the most effective being preemptive attacks against them. Alternatively, they erect forts at strategic points, and where possible, build a defensive line, such as a wall, to resist attacks by horsemen, similar to breakwaters. The Chinese built small castles against the Huns, which were later combined by China Shi Huang Ti to establish the Great Wall of China, an architectural masterpiece that is constantly repaired, reviewed, and expanded. Persians also constructed barricades on the steppe borders, with Alexander the Great following a similar approach (Yüksel et al., 2021a, p. 120).

The topic of the Great Wall of China is discussed in both Turkish history and international relations textbooks. The history textbook emphasizes the Great Wall as a defensive measure utilized by settled societies against nomadic societies, while the international relations textbook highlights the Great Wall's construction as a response to Turkish raids in 214 BC. The discrepancy in discourse surrounding the Great Wall's construction is evident, and it suggests an intention to portray China in a positive light by implying that the Chinese people built the wall out of fear of the Turks. The Turkish-Chinese relations in history and the construction of the Great Wall play a significant role in shaping Türkiye's perception and image of China. The international relations textbook also mentions that China's closed and supremacist attitude prohibited long-term foreign representatives in the country, and other states only established relations with China through war. The chapter related to the Great Wall of China is mentioned in the international textbook as follows:

The state with which Turks established the most relations in the early ages is China. In order to stop Turkish raids, the Chinese built the Great Wall of China (214 BC). Additionally, the common geography between Turks and Chinese led to mutual influence in areas such as military service, state organization, agriculture, and philosophy (Şahin, Muslu, Recep, Araz, 2021, p. 40).

The present study examines the representation of China in Turkish history textbooks with a focus on the Great Wall of China. Analysis of two different textbooks reveals contrasting discourses on the purpose of the wall's construction. The history textbook portrays the Great Wall as a strategy utilized by settled societies against nomadic societies, while the international relations textbook suggests that the wall was built to deter incursions from the Turks. Notably, the history textbook does not explicitly acknowledge the wall's construction in response to attacks from the Turks. This omission could be interpreted as an attempt to positively portray China by suggesting that the wall's construction was motivated by fear of the Turks. It is worth noting that Turkish-Chinese relations in history and the construction of the Great Wall have played a crucial role in shaping Türkiye's perception and image of China.

The Representation of Ancient Silk Road Trading and Exchange in Turkish History Textbooks

China's trading on the Silk Road and its routes is frequently discussed in history textbooks, particularly in terms of its interaction with the Gokturks period. The Turks and the Chinese often clashed during this period as they vied for control of the Silk Road. However, they also engaged in commercial activities by exchanging their belongings. The textbooks describe how trade in the old Turkish communities was largely based on exchange, with horses being the primary mode of exchange. Furthermore, the Turks used money to buy goods they needed, often obtained under the name of taxes, tribute and war compensation, from neighboring countries such as Byzantium, China, and Sassanid (Yüksel ve diğerleri, 2021a, p. 121).

The textbooks highlight the measures taken by the first Turkish states to ensure the safe realization of their trade with neighboring countries, with the first free trade market (Yılmaz, Duran, Köse, 2021, p. 133) being established between the Asian Hun State and China according to historical records (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 123). The textbooks also note that the Turks traded as intermediaries between the east and the west, and “*made significant profits from the sale of Chinese silk to the West*” (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 122). While the textbooks acknowledge the Turks’ struggle with China on the Silk Road, they emphasize the Turks’ contributions to commercial activities by providing necessary animals such as horses and camels to the caravans and offering food and beverage services for a certain fee. Overall, the textbooks illustrate the complex interactions between the Turks and the Chinese on the Silk Road, shedding light on the role of the Turks as intermediaries and their significant contributions to the trade and exchange on this historic route.

The Representation of China’s Modern Silk Road: One Belt One Road and the Middle Corridor in Turkish History Textbooks

In Turkish history textbooks, there is frequent mention of commercial activities between the Turkish states and China, such as the trade on the ancient Silk Road route, the exchange of goods, and the first free trade market between the Huns and the Chinese. However, the recent update of the 9th grade history textbook by the Ministry of National Education in 2021 includes a mentioned about the “*One Belt One Road Project*” (Image 3), also known as the New Silk Road Project, which aims to revive the old Silk Road. The New Silk Road project was first mentioned in the textbook in 2018. “In the history textbook in 2018, the “Modern Silk Road Project” was explained and it was mentioned that China has shown a significant economic growth after 2000s along with the developments in industrialization and technology, and has become a power which every country wants to cooperate (Kaya, 2019, p. 70)”. This inclusion in the curriculum indicates an update and renewal of the content, as the project is not yet a widely known topic in Turkish society. Moreover, the textbook highlights the importance of the project by mentioning that it will connect the countries on the route through various modes of transportation, including land, sea, air, railways, and port-pipelines. The Silk Road is described in the history textbook as follows:

The Silk Road represents a trade route that starts from China and ends in Europe via Anatolia and the Mediterranean. (Image 3.18) Named its most important symbol “silk” Silk Road served as an intermediary in the transportation of commercial goods, people, cultures, and ideas. Although the route which has provided the interaction between East and West culture lost its importance with the discovery of alternative routes, it has regained attention in recent years. With the increasing industrialization and technological developments after the 2000s, showing serious economic growth, China has become an actor that every country wants to cooperate with. Aiming to expand its sphere of influence by using this advantage, China carries out important studies in order to implement the One Belt One Road project, which is viewed as the world's largest transportation project (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 87).

The history textbooks used in Türkiye have made frequent reference to commercial activities between Türkiye and China, such as the trade along the ancient Silk Road route, the Turks’ trading activities in Chinese silk to the west, and the exchange of commercial activities between them, including the first free trade market between the Huns and the Chinese. However, the latest version of the 9th-grade history textbook, which was updated by the Ministry of National Education in 2021 which was similar to 2018 version, features a new addition to the curriculum, namely the mention of the One Belt One Road Project, also called New Silk Road Project that was initiated by China in 2013. The inclusion of this project in the history textbook curriculum is an indication that the curriculum has been renewed and updated to reflect current events.

The One Belt One Road project is not yet widely known in Turkish society, and the textbook provides a comprehensive explanation of the project. The importance of the project is

emphasized by noting that the Modern Silk Road Project will be in harmony with the Middle Corridor project, which is the Turkish leg of the One Belt One Road project, and that it will connect the countries along the route through land, sea, air, railways, and port-pipelines.

The textbook highlights the benefits of the One Belt One Road Project and aims to create a positive perception of China by asking students questions such as: “*What are the reasons why countries want to cooperate with China? In which areas does the modern Silk Road include investment initiatives? What can be the effects of the Modern Silk Road Project on the Turkish economy today? What are the differences between the Historical Silk Road and the Modern Silk Road?*” The inclusion of these questions in the curriculum indicates an effort to create a positive image of China among students, particularly by drawing attention to the potential contributions of the project to the Turkish economy.

China’s Inventions and Art Activities

The Turkish history textbook calendar systems chapter also mentioned China. These textbooks mention that different civilizations, including the Sumerians, Egyptians and Chinese used various calendars. Of particular importance is the Turkish calendar with Twelve Animals. The textbook notes that this calendar was the first one used by Turks and was utilized by Uyghurs and Kök Turks. Furthermore, it is considered to be one of the crucial cultural legacies left by the ancient Turkish civilizations as a result of astronomical observations, which have continued to the present day. The textbook stresses that the Turkish calendar with Twelve Animals is a significant cultural heritage, and also highlights the fact that this calendar is of Turkish origin, while the Chinese have incorporated it as an element of their own culture.

Similar statements also appear in history textbooks previously taught in schools. In these history textbooks, it was stated that the Chinese continue to use the Twelve Animal Turkish calendar, which the Turks do not use today, and therefore they try to present this calendar as a value of Chinese culture” (Kaya, 2019, p. 58). As Related chapter about twelve animal calendar is as follows:

The calendar developed by the Turks had a considerable impact on the whole region, with many Asian civilizations utilizing the same or similar calendars. Today, the Turks do not use the Turkish Calendar with Twelve Animals, but the Chinese still use it. The textbooks suggest that the Chinese present this calendar as a value belonging to their own culture, despite its Turkish origin (Yüksel at all., 2021a, p. 24).

The mention of China in Turkish history textbooks extends to the discussion of Chinese inventions. These textbooks recognize the Four Great Inventions of ancient China, which includes the invention of paper and the printing press (Yüksel, Kapar, Bağcı, Bildik, Şahin Şafak, Ardiç, 2021c, p.37). (Image 3) Moreover, they highlight China’s significant contributions to weaving, particularly in the context of silk, despite the Ottoman Empire’s well-established weaving industry. Specifically, the textbooks note that even China, renowned for its weaving tradition, purchased fabrics from Bursa during the Ottoman era (Yüksel at all., 2021b, p. 115). Furthermore, while discussing the Topkapı Palace, which served as the center of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish history textbooks acknowledge the presence of valuable Chinese porcelain within the palace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of Turkish history textbooks has shown that China is represented in various ways, including its historical and cultural significance, technological advancements, and economic relations with Türkiye. In Turkish secondary education history textbooks, discourses concerning China are predominantly found in the 9th grade textbook, particularly in the section discussing China's interactions with pre-Islamic Turkish states. The name of China (in Turkish “Çin”) often appears in the historical accounts of Chinese-Turkish

relations. Additionally, the Great Wall of China is frequently mentioned in textbooks at different grades. Explanations for the construction of the Great Wall are presented from two distinct perspectives. One perspective characterizes the Great Wall as a defensive structure erected to protect settled societies from nomadic groups, while another perspective posits that the wall was constructed to prevent incursions from the Turks. Notably, Turkish history textbooks do not generally present a negative image of China in their discourses.

While the textbooks acknowledge China's contribution to world history, they also exhibit certain biases and inaccuracies. For instance, the textbooks sometimes present the Turkish Calendar with Twelve Animals as a Chinese cultural heritage, despite its Turkish origin. Similarly, the texts mention China's weaving and porcelain industries in the Ottoman period but do not provide a comprehensive understanding of the history of these industries in China. Furthermore, the textbooks do not always reflect the complexity and diversity of China's culture, economy, and politics, which could lead to a simplified and stereotypical portrayal of the country. Therefore, it is important to critically examine the representation of China in Turkish history textbooks and to promote a more accurate and nuanced understanding of China among Turkish students. Such efforts could contribute to a more informed and respectful relationship between Türkiye and China in the future.

Compared to the history textbooks taught in previous years, today's history textbooks include positive discourses about Chinese civilization rather than political and military relations between two countries. While today's history textbooks mention about China's relations with the pre-Islamic Turkish states, Turkish superiority is not mentioned as in the previous books. Although the history textbooks taught in previous years mentioned that the construction of the Great Wall of China was built due to the skill of the Turks and the Chinese's fear of the Huns, in today's history textbooks, the construction of the Great Wall is mentioned under the title of Defense Walls of Settled Societies against Nomads. It is an indication that positive discourse is used against in China in today's history textbooks.

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Appendix



Image 1: The Great Wall of China

(Related Image was taken from the Ministry of National Education 9th Grade History Textbook. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OsfaRMVcKgmkfIOZQNplKeqsM_XkJWI/view , p.120. Date Accessed: 10.05.2023)



Görsel 4.12
Hunların Çin Seddi'ne akınları
(İllüstrasyon)
(İstanbul Harbiye Askeri Müzesi)

lerin maiyetlerinde Hun ülke ajanlar, türlü entrikalarla Hun düşmanlık çıkarmıştı. Ayrıca eşya göndererek Hunları rahat

Image 2: Huns Incursions to the Great Wall of China

(Related Image is taken from the 9th Grade History Textbook of the Ministry of National Education. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OsfvaRMVcKgmkfioZQNplKeqsM_XkJWI/view , p.100. Date Accessed: 10.05.2023)

Kâğıdın Serüveni
Parşömen, keçi ve koyun derisinin üzerindeki yünün veya kılın kazınıp derinin birkaç gün kireçli suda bekletilmesi, ardından da sünger taşı ile parlatılmasıyla elde edilir ve bu yüzden pahalı bir malzemedir. Kitap basımı için parşömen yerine kâğıdın kullanılması bir dönüm noktası olmuştur. Kâğıt, dut ağacı kalıpları, kendir, kenevir ve paçavra kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Parşömene göre daha ucuz olan kâğıt, MS 105'te Çin'de icat edilmiştir (Görsel 2.39). Müslümanlar, Çinlilerden bu icadı öğrenmiş ve kâğıt üretmeye başlamıştır. İslam dünyasında bol miktarda kâğıt üretilmesi, Orta Çağ'da İslam kültürünün üstün olmasının sebepleri arasındadır. Kâğıt, İspanya'yı fetheden Müslümanlar tarafından Avrupa'ya taşınmıştır. Müslümanlar, XII. yüzyılda Endülüs'te Avrupa'nın ilk kâğıt imalathanelerini kurmuştur. 1276 yılında İtalya'nın Fabriano şehrinde imal edilene kadar Avrupalılar, kâğıt ihtiyacını Yakın Doğu ve İspanya'dan karşılamıştır. Kâğıt imalatı Fransa'da 1348, Almanya'da 1390, İngiltere'de 1495 ve Amerika'da 1690'da başlamıştır.
Osman Ersoy, "Kağıt", s.163-165'ten düzenlenmiştir.

Görsel 2.39
Kağıt üretimi
(İllüstrasyon)

ÖRNEK METİN

Image 3: The Invention of Paper

(Related Image was taken from the 9th and 11th Grade History Textbook of the Ministry of National Education. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OsfvaRMVcKgmkfioZQNplKeqsM_XkJWI/view s, p. 37 and <https://drive.google.com/file/d/18fO3ydrM9AXqELI5kS5QsCayIRBv59TG/view> , p.79. Date Accessed: 10.05.2023)

Tek Kuşak-Tek Yol

İpek Yolu Çin'den başlayarak Anadolu ve Akdeniz üzerinden Avrupa'da son bulan bir ticaret yolunu temsil etmektedir (Görsel 3.18). Adını en önemli simgesi olan "ipek"ten alan bu ticaret yolu yalnızca ticari malların değil insanların, kültürlerin ve fikirlerin taşınmasında da aracı bir rol oynamıştır. Doğu ile Batı kültürü arasındaki etkileşimi tarih boyunca sağlamış olan yol, alternatif güzergâhların bulunmasıyla birlikte önemini yitirmiş olmasına rağmen son yıllarda tekrar dünya gündemine girmiştir. 2000'li yıllardan sonra artan sanayileşme ve teknolojik gelişmeler ile birlikte ciddi bir ekonomik büyüme performansı sergileyen Çin, hemen her ülkenin iş birliği yapmak istediği bir aktör hâline gelmiştir. Bu avantajını kullanarak etki alanını genişletmeyi amaçlayan Çin, dünyanın en büyük ulaşım projesi olarak görülen "Tek Kuşak, Tek Yol" yani Modern İpek Yolu (The New Silk Road) Projesini hayata geçirmek adına önemli çalışmalar yapmaktadır. Proje; başta Çin olmak üzere bağımsızlıklarını kazandıktan sonra dünyayla ekonomik entegrasyona öncelik veren Orta Asya Türk Cumhuriyetleri ile Türkiye, İran ve Rusya gibi önemli ülkeleri içermektedir.

Asya, Afrika ve Avrupa'yı birbirine bağlayacak olan Modern İpek Yolu Projesi (kara-yollar, tren yolları, limanlar ve enerji nakil hatlarını içeren milyarlarca dolarlık altyapı yatırım girişimi) ile ilgili olarak ilk kez 14-15 Mayıs 2017 tarihlerinde Pekin'de bir zirve düzenlenmiştir. 29 ülkenin devlet ve hükümet başkanlarının katıldığı zirvede proje dünyaya anlatılmıştır. Türkiye'nin önerdiği "Orta Koridor" projeleri ile uyum içinde olması planlanan Modern İpek Yolu Projesi'nin, güzergâh üzerindeki ülkeleri kara, deniz, hava ve demir yolları ve liman-boru hatları aracılığıyla birbirine bağlaması planlanmaktadır. Modern İpek Yolu Projesi en basit hâliyle geçeceği 65 ülkeyi yol, liman, demir yolu (Görsel 3.19), havaalanı ile birbirine bağlamayı hedeflemektedir.

Erdal Tanas Karagöl, "Modern İpek Yolu Projesi", s.1-7'den düzenlenmiştir.



Görsel 3.18
İpek Yolu kervanı anıtı (Kazakistan)



Görsel 3.19
İpek Yolu'na döşenen demir yolu (Çin)

Aşağıdaki soruları metinden yola çıkarak cevaplayınız.

1. Kültürlerin ve fikirlerin taşınmasında İpek Yolu'nun önemi nedir?
2. Ülkelerin Çin ile iş birliği yapmak istemesinin nedenleri nelerdir?
3. Modern İpek Yolu Projesi hangi alanlarda yatırım girişimlerini içermektedir?
4. Entegrasyon ne demektir?
5. Modern İpek Yolu Projesi'nin günümüzde Türk ekonomisine etkileri neler olabilir?
6. Tarihi İpek Yolu ile Modern İpek Yolu arasındaki önemli farklılıklar nelerdir?

Image 4: One Belt, One Road Project

(Related Image was taken from the 9th Grade History Textbook of the Ministry of National Education. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OsfvaRMVcKgmKfiOZQNplKeqsM_XkJWI/view , p. 87. Date Accessed: 10.05.2023)